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# Historical Sketch of Camden

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HOWARD M. COOPER



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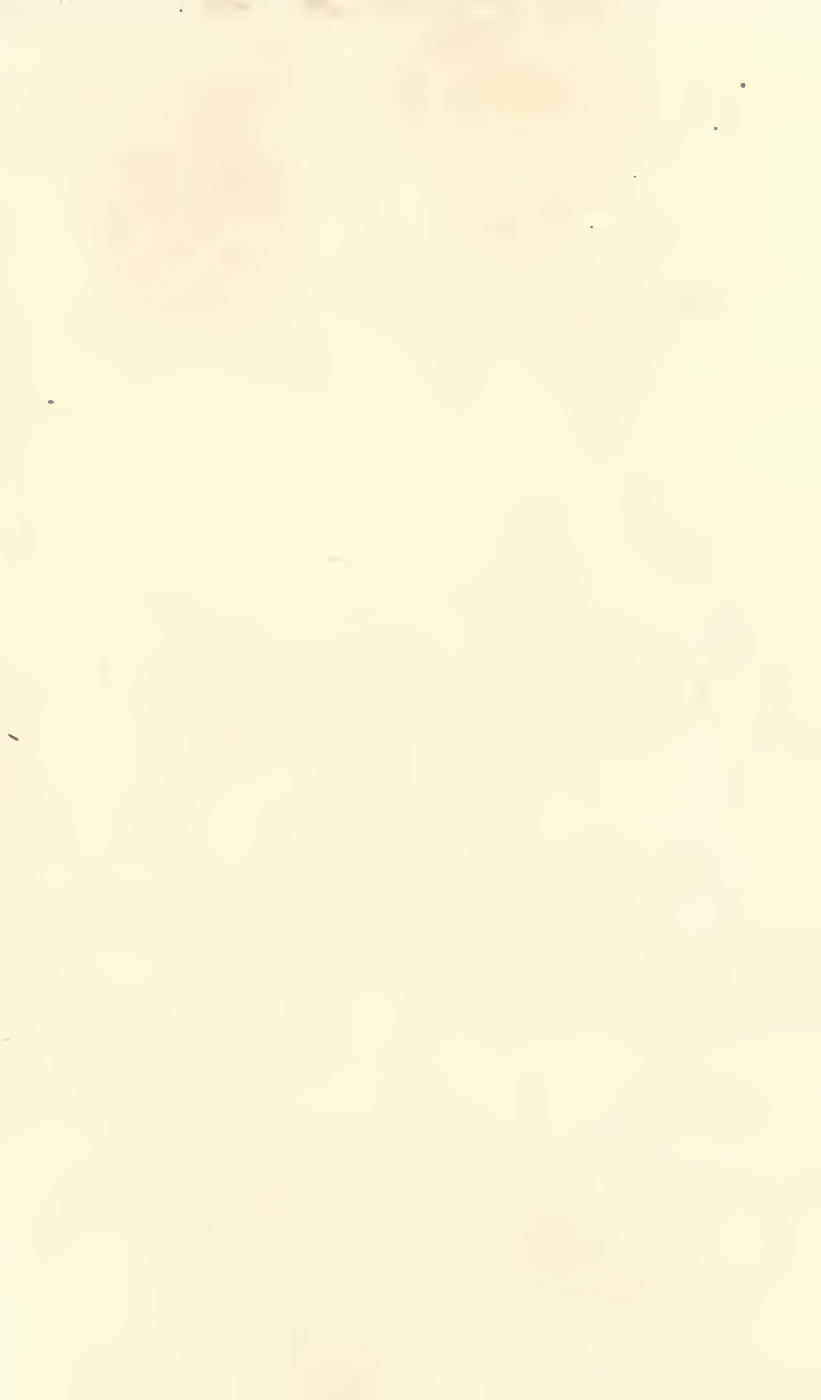
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# HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF

## CAMDEN, N. J.

BY

HOWARD M. COOPER

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A revision and amplification of a paper read before the  
Camden County Historical Society, June 13, 1899

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With an Introduction by

HON. CHARLES VAN DYKE JOLINE

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## Introduction

If one were to seek the genesis of Camden he would not find it in the visit of the sturdy Dutchman, DeVries, nor of any explorer who followed, nor in the voyages of those in search of a land where they might increase their wordly possessions, but rather would he find it in souls devoted to principle, and primed with courage never to yield; in a quiet contest for right and equality, which knew no submission.

In one of his stories Robert Louis Stevenson tells of a rider issuing from a forest upon the high road and gazing upon it as it runs down hill before him, joining road after road, skirting the sea and passing through city after city to the farthest end of Europe. May we not picture some such person, some one denied that which he conceived to be right and determined to seek a refuge elsewhere, looking out upon the high road, and meditating upon where it will lead him. As it reaches from him it skirts the seashore, and suddenly melts away and is lost to sight, for it has taken its course across the "deep, dark, blue ocean" leading to a spot upon the banks of the Dela-

ware, and there ending in the founding of a home in another clime and upon alien soil.

Thus it was that William Cooper, leaving his native land and tarrying for nearly a year at Burlington, came to Camden about 1680, where he built a home at Pyne Poynte.

Ruskin asserts that "all the pure and noble arts of peace are founded on war," and that "it is the foundation of all the high virtues and faculties of man." This may or may not be true, but it may fairly be said that all great results proceed from contest and struggle and it may as fairly be said that to contest and struggle, not of deeds of arms, but for the maintenance of rights, may we trace the beginning of our city. Though this be true, still its inception was as peaceful as is the bosom of the river which flows past its door.

At this point I am tempted, in a few bold strokes, to tell of the evolution of the wilderness into a city, of the felling of the primeval forest, of the growth of roads and streets from little pathways, of the founding of new homes, the advent of new faces, and of the innumerable things which gradually but surely alter the face of the land, but were I to attempt it I fear that the good people who have the courage to read this introduction would accuse me of theft of the idea from Hawthorne's

charming story "Main Street," of the facts from Mr. Cooper's delightful and instructive sketch.

A descendant of the William Cooper above referred to, Mr. Howard M. Cooper, has given to the citizens of Camden a work of great value, for in it he has recorded many facts known to few besides himself and it suggests the following thought: We now have daily papers giving the current life of our city, but there is much that rests alone in the memory of our citizens that should be saved for the future historian. In Holland there are public archives where historic facts may be preserved. It surely would be of value for such a depository to be established in one of our public libraries. Encouragement should then be given to our citizens to reduce to writing their recollections of past and present events, and, being safely kept where access could be had to them at all times, who can tell but that they might be an inspiration to some one in the future to continue the labor of love and affection so admirably begun by Mr. Cooper.

January 22, 1909.

CHARLES VAN DYKE JOLINE.





LORD CAMDEN





## Chapter 1

In 1618 Lord De La Warr, sailing along the Atlantic coast on his return to Virginia from England, died at sea opposite the mouth of "a goodly and noble river," which, as a perpetual monument to his memory, forever indicating the place of his death, was thence called the Delaware.<sup>1</sup> Sailing up this wide river in 1631, noting the creeks and estuaries emptying into it, the Dutch commander, De Vries, discovered about one hundred miles from its mouth, on the eastern shore, a large thickly wooded island, which he called Jacques Eylandt. The Swedes, coming some seven or eight years after, observing the same isle, with much better taste called it by its Indian name, Aquikanasra, an island destined to be, a century and a half later, the site of the town of Camden. By the concurrent testimony of the early Dutch and Swedish writers it was bounded on the west and north by the Delaware; on the east by what the Indians called the Asoroche river, the Dutch the Timmerkill, the Swedes the Hiorte-Kilen—our Cooper's creek; and on the south by the Quinquorenning of the Indians, the Graef Ernest of the Dutch—our Newton creek.<sup>2</sup>

Whether these early historians were absolutely correct in their geography or not, it will not seem impossible that the waters of Cooper's Creek once had an outlet into Newton Creek

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<sup>1</sup> Barker's Sketches, 14; Smith's Hist. Va., 148.

<sup>2</sup> Lindstrom's Map, Vol. 9, p. 19, N. J. Hist. Soc.

to any one who will carefully observe the topography of the land along the Haddonfield turnpike about where the White Horse road branches off, and note on the one hand the ravine across Harleigh Cemetery, that, even now, when its upper end has been filled for a roadway, puts up almost to the turnpike, and a little beyond, on the other hand, winding through the low land skirting the road, the small rivulet that is the head of the north branch of Newton Creek, with only the narrow water-shed along which the Haddonfield turnpike runs, dividing them. Seeing this, and recollecting how universally the cutting off the forests lessens the rainfall and diminishes the streams, the observer will hesitate before accusing the early Dutch and Swedish discoverers of anticipating Munchausen.

Though they explored, neither the Dutch nor the Swedes settled here where the Maeroahkong tribe of the Delaware Indians lived, as their fathers had before them, undisturbed by the fact that across the great water an humble shepherd, aroused by the light within him to God's call, was preaching the absolute equality of man, and the entire peaceableness of God's Kingdom, and was drawing down upon himself and upon those whose consciences, awakened by his calls, were in numbers joining him, the oppression and the ire of those who profited by caste and lived by the sword. Until persecution in England drove the Friends to West Jersey for asylum, these Indians, under Arasapha, their king, with their village at

Cooper's Point, were the only inhabitants within our limits.

Who first of the English emigrants made the future Camden his home is uncertain, but it was probably Richard Arnold or William Cooper. Few traces remain of Richard Arnold, who seems to have left no descendants in these parts. William Cooper, ancestor of many families that still cluster about his choice of a home, came from England in 1679 and stopped for about a year at Burlington, before he chose his permanent residence. Passing up and down the Delaware, the bold bluff, heavily wooded with pine timber at the point where the river, sharply curving, receives the stream called by the Swedes the Hiorte-Kilen, or Deer Creek, from the many deer seen along its banks, and along which grew "peach trees and the sweet smelling sassafras tree," striking his fancy, he fixed upon it as his future abode, and called it "Pyne Poynte." His name, however, soon attached itself permanently to both point and creek. He located at Cooper's Point in the spring of 1681, building his house well out on the river's edge, just below the mouth of the creek, a site long years ago washed away by the encroaching tide.

Recognizing the brotherhood of the Indians and their right to the soil that they and their fathers hunted over and possessed undisputed, the commissioners sent over by the proprietors of West Jersey bought of them their right from Oldman's Creek to Assunpink, securing their title by three deeds, the earliest of which, dated

September 10th, 1677, covered Camden's territory, and extended from Timber to Rancocas Creek.<sup>1</sup> William Cooper, further to satisfy the tribe at Cooper's Point, paid them for the right they still claimed, and received from them a deed executed by Tallacca, their chief, and witnessed by several of their tribe. Returning the red man's trust and friendlessness with honesty and fair dealing, Camden's early settlers found them always friends, and no tales of Indian massacre blot her history.

Thus was commenced, at the very outset, that never-varying policy of justness in all her dealings with the Indians that has given to our fair State such enviable and exceptional fame, enabling Samuel L. Southard eloquently to say: "It is a proud fact in the history of New Jersey, that every part of her soil has been obtained from the Indians by fair and voluntary purchase and transfer, a fact that no other State in the Union, not even the land which bears the name of Penn, can boast of."

Before the settlement of our overshadowing neighbor of Brotherly Love, a few other scattering Friends, following William Cooper, began to locate in the neighborhood of his home; and as they had braved the perils of the ocean and of the wilderness, and tore themselves away from all ties of home, kindred and early associations, for the boon of worshipping God uninterruptedly in the way that to them seemed right, they immediately, though but two or three gathered in His name, opened a meet-

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<sup>1</sup> Howe's Hist. Coll'n, pp. 21, 220.

ing for His worship, the first record of which is this minute of the Monthly Meeting held at Thomas Gardiner's house, Burlington, Seventh month (September) 5th, 1681: "Ordered that Friends of Pyne Poynte have a meeting on every Fourth day, and to begin at the second hour, at Richard Arnold's house." Arnold's house stood, as shown on Thomas Sharp's map of A. D. 1700, a short distance above the mouth of Newton Creek, and thus, within its log walls, at the very beginning of the settlement, was the first of Camden's ever widening circle of churches established. It was the only "meeting" between Salem and Burlington, and the third in priority in West Jersey, and has been kept up by Friends without a lapse from that time to the present.

Shortly afterward the meeting was held at Pyne Poynte, at the house of William Cooper, a minister, and continued there until the arrival of the "Irish Friends," who settled at Newton in the spring of 1682, when, as Thomas Sharp, their historian, quaintly says, "Immediately there was a meeting sett up and kept at the house of Mark Newbie, and in a short time it grew and increased, unto which William Cooper and family, that live at the Poynte, resorted, and sometimes the meeting was kept at his house, who had been settled sometime before."

But as the Newton Friends were much more numerous than the few scattered families about the Poynte, it was more convenient to most of the members for the place of worship to be



located at their settlement; and in 1684 the first building devoted to religious meetings in Gloucester county was built on the middle branch of Newton Creek, at what is now West Collingswood Station, on the Reading Railroad to Atlantic City. It, and the graveyard by its side, were placed on the bank of the stream, the only available highway in those days of roadless forests, when the water bore alike the halcyon voyages of youth, the grave worshippers and the solemn funeral train.

By 1686 quite a number of emigrants had arrived in this part of West Jersey and settled about Red Bank, Woodbury, Arwames or Gloucester, Newton and the Poynte, and felt strongly the inconvenience of having to go all the way to Salem or Burlington to transact their public business. Accordingly, on the 26th of May, 1686, the proprietors, freeholders and inhabitants of the "Third and Fourth Tenth," that is, the territory between Pensauken and Oldman's Creek, acting in the spirit of pure democracy, met at Arwames and formed that quaintly curious frame of county government, having only ten short paragraphs, that is still preserved in the original book of minutes, in the Clerk's office of Gloucester county, at Woodbury.

"This was the origin of Old Gloucester, the only county in New Jersey that can deduce its existence from a direct and positive compact between her inhabitants."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mickle's Reminiscences, p. 35.

The action of the people in thus forming their county organization, without any authority of the Legislature, was, after having been indirectly recognized in one or two other laws, directly sanctioned, in 1694, by an act of the Legislature, establishing the boundaries that they had themselves chosen, and adopting their title of the County of Gloucester.

The courts of the county so organized met for ten years in taverns or in private houses, sometimes at Red Bank and sometimes at Arwames. At the latter place, on December 2d, 1689, they ordered "a goale or logg house for the securing of prisoners,"<sup>1</sup> to be built. And on June 1st, 1696, they ordered "a prison twenty foot long and sixteen wide, of a sufficient heighth and strength made of loggs to be erected and builded at Gloucester—with a Court House over ye same of convenient heighth and largeness." The first of the series of court houses that has culminated in Camden's noble one of to-day.

A vivid reminder that the barbarous criminal punishments of England of the seventeenth century were not left behind them by the emigrants to New Jersey is found in the minute of that Court, of March 1st, 1691, that a man was found guilty of perjury and sentenced *by the jury* "to pay twenty pounds fine or stand in ye pillory one hour. To which ye bench assents, and ye prisoner chusing to stand in ye pillory they award and order the same to be in Gloucester on ye twelfth day of April next,

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<sup>1</sup> Mickle, p. 37.

between ye hours of ten in ye morning and four in ye afternoon." Equally striking is the minute of a little later date that, "It is agreed by this meeting that a payor of substantial stocks be erected near the prison with a post at each end, well fixed and fastened with a hand cuff iron att one of them for a whipping post."

The necessity of a regular ferry to Philadelphia being very soon felt by the new settlers, they applied to their new Court, at Gloucester, to license one, which on the first day of First month, (March) 1687, it did, as appears by this minute: "It is proposed to ye Bench y-t a fferry is very needfull and much wanted from Jersey to Philadelphia, and y-t William Royden's house is look-t upon as a place convenient, and the said William Royden, a person suitable for that imploy, and therefore an order desired from ye Bench that a fferry may be there fixed, &c., to which ye Bench assents and refer to ye grand jury to methodize ye same and fix ye rates thereof." This they proceeded to do in a very leisurely manner, for not until one year afterwards, on the first day of the First month, 1688, did they issue their license to William Royden and his assigns, permitting and appointing "that a common passage or ferry for man and beast be provided, fixed and settled in some convenient and proper place between ye mouths or entrances of Cooper's Creek and Newton Creek," within which limits "all other persons are desired and requested to keep no other common or public



passage or ferry." The license also fixed the ferriage at not more than 6d. per head, for each person, and 12d. for man and horse or other beast, except swine, calves and sheep, "which shall pay only six pence per head and no more."

Thus was established the original of our present ample ferry facilities. It was located near the foot of Cooper street, its boats being open flat-boats propelled by oars or sails. A few years afterwards it was purchased by William Cooper, and for more than one hundred years thereafter Camden was everywhere known as Cooper's Ferries. To-day our Royden street perpetuates the memory of Camden's first ferryman.

Cooper's Creek was much too great a river to ford, so that Samuel Spicer, who lived on its east side, near its mouth, established a ferry across it, at what is now Federal street, that was maintained until the year 1747, when the first bridge was erected. Thus, with ferries across the western and eastern boundaries of the island of Aquikanasra, its inhabitants were in full touch with their neighbors. From that island to-day, five steam ferries cross the Delaware to Philadelphia and four bridges span Cooper's Creek. Who can say that the much-talked-of tunnel under the Delaware may not soon more closely unite the twin cities on its shores?

The establishment of the county only supplied a part of the necessary political machinery, and so on the first day of June, 1695,

the Grand Jury, with the assent of the Bench, and in accordance with an act of the then last Assembly, constituted the constablewick or township of Newton to extend from "the lowermost branch of Cooper's Creek to ye southerly branch of Newton Creek bounding Gloucester," but fixing no bounds on the east. With their local government thus completed, the people in these parts remained content for one hundred and thirty-three years. Thus was created old Newton township, which, after having its fairest portion cut off in the creation of Haddon township, was finally, after a life of one hundred and seventy-six years, swallowed up by its own progeny and obliterated from the map in 1871, when Camden's revised charter was obtained.

Robert Turner, an Irish Friend, residing in Philadelphia, owned large estates in Pennsylvania and in East and West Jersey, among which were some large tracts of land within the present limits of Camden. In 1696 he sold to John Kaighin four hundred and fifty-five acres, and the next year five hundred and ten acres, lower down the river, to Archibald Mickle. John Kaighin came originally from the Isle of Man and Archibald Mickle from Ireland. Both settled for a short time in Philadelphia, but each moved to Jersey on making these purchases. John Kaighin chose for the site of his house the Point that bears his name to this day, and shortly afterwards built, with bricks brought from England, a substantial house, modeled after an English farm house

which, standing at the southeast corner of Second and Sycamore streets, but so greatly enlarged and changed as to have lost all its original appearance, and now numbered 1128 and 1130 South Second street, is probably the oldest house in Camden. Its site on the river bank, its front yard extending to the water's edge, was a beautiful one, with its unobstructed view at the Point up and down the broad Delaware. Elizabeth Haddon, a good friend of John Kaighin, about the year 1704, on her return from one of her visits to her old English home, brought with her some box and yew trees and gave two of each to him, who planted them in front of his house, where they lived and grew for nearly two hundred years, landmarks of Kaighn's Point. The last of the box trees was blown over during a great storm, on February 2, 1876. The yew trees lived until the winter of 1898-99 when they died, but one of them yet stands at the corner of the two streets. At Haddonfield, in the yard of Samuel Wood, near his dwelling, which stands on the site of Elizabeth Haddon's home, yet live yew and box trees which she brought to America with those she gave to John Kaighin.

William Cooper, John Kaighin and Archibald Mickle soon became prominent men, and their descendants gradually increased their possessions until they owned all the land within the limits of our city before its absorption of the town of Stockton. The Coopers' land, extending southward to Line street, so-called

because it marked the line between them and the Kaighins; the Kaighins' land extending southward from Line street to Little Newton Creek, popularly known as the Line Ditch, because it was the boundary between them and the Mickles; and the Mickles' land extending southward from Line Ditch to Newton Creek, and every title in Camden to-day, between Cooper's Creek and the Delaware, can be traced back to a Mickle, a Kaighin or a Cooper.

At the opening of the Eighteenth century the smoke curling from less than a dozen clearings by the water's edge pointed out the fore-runners more than two centuries ago of our present expanding town. A score of years of hard work had passed since they landed; they had gathered about them some few of the comforts they had left behind across the seas; they had "sett up" the meeting for the free worship of God that caused them to leave friends and relations and "transport themselves and families into this wilderness part of America"; they had established ferry communication with their friends across Delaware river and Cooper's creek; they had settled their free form of local civil government, and, having recognized the right of the aborigines to the soil and treated them as its owners, they were living in most harmonious relations with them, and, gradually increasing their clearings, they were quietly prospering. Their growth was only the steady increase of an industrious population. For, after the arrival and settlement

of the Irish Friends at Newton, there was no great influx of emigrants to this part of West Jersey, Philadelphia attracting the greater part of the new-comers. Occasionally a family would move across the river, but down to the time of the Revolution the population was mainly the descendants of those who were swept over here on that swell of migration caused by religious persecution in England in the Seventeenth century, so that when the Declaration of Independence had been made, while Philadelphia had become the first town in the colonies, our territory was yet largely woodland, dotted by a few farm houses and intersected by but one or two roads.

However, in 1773, Jacob Cooper, a merchant living in Philadelphia, and a lineal descendant of the first William Cooper, foreseeing the future town, employed Thompson, a Philadelphia surveyor, to lay out forty acres into a town plot. A Whig, sympathizing with his fellow Whigs in their struggles to obtain from their mother country that representation which they claimed should ever accompany taxation, and venerating those Englishmen who, believing in the justness of this demand of the colonies, had the courage to openly avow their belief, Jacob Cooper named his new town Camden, in honor of that great English judge, that wise English statesman, that powerful champion of constitutional liberty and firm advocate of fair dealing with the colonies, who has been called the right arm of Lord Chatham, Charles Pratt, first Earl of Camden, who so



endeared himself to our countrymen that twenty-one towns in the United States to-day bear his name. In the infant town thus christened only six streets ran north and south—King, Queen, Whitehall, Cherry, Cedar and Pine, intersected at right angles at the Delaware side by Cooper and Market streets only, but on the eastern side by Plum street also.

With that same admixture of loyalty and defiance so marked in almost all the earlier steps taken by our Revolutionary forefathers, while naming his town after one of the foremost champions of the American cause in England, Jacob Cooper honored his King and Queen in the naming of his streets, and through all the bitter feeling engendered by our two struggles with the mother country his nomenclature remained unchanged. It was not until May 24th, 1832, that adopting a new system, by ordinance of Council, King, Queen, Whitehall, Cherry, Cedar and Pine became Front, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth streets. But it was left until the days of pretentious change that, in the very mockery of old associations, on Camden's one hundredth anniversary, time-honored Plum was dropped for meaningless Arch.

Almost immediately after Camden was planned the Revolution broke out and the struggle for independence and existence as a free people absorbing all other energies, scarcely a thing was done to promote the growth of the little town whose birth was so unheralded.





GENERAL ABERCROMBIE'S HEADQUARTERS



During the whole of the occupation of Philadelphia by the British, Cooper's Point was held by them as an outpost, General Abercrombie having his headquarters in the old gambrel-roofed farm house, still standing at the head of Point street, with the stone in which is cut the date of its erection, 1734, still in place in its gable end, while an English and several Scotch and Hessian regiments were quartered at the old ferry house, at the foot of Cooper street, torn down in 1882. The British lines extended along the river front from Cooper's Point down nearly to Market street; thence up to Sixth street; thence diagonally about north-east to Cooper's creek, portions of their redoubts remaining for many years afterwards.

The Hessians, under Count Donop, two thousand five hundred strong, crossed at Cooper's Point late in the afternoon of the 21st of October, 1777, on their way to the battle of Red Bank, and the straggling survivors, after their defeat, returned to Philadelphia the same way. Marching to the battle by way of Haddonfield and Clement's bridge, in order to cross the creeks, the Americans having destroyed the bridges lower down the stream to obstruct such an attack, the Hessians, thirsty, stopped to get drink at the brick farm house of Joseph Mickle, that stood, until torn down in April, 1908, on Mickle hill, east of Mount Ephraim avenue, between Everett and Thurman streets, near the stand-pipe. Unable to pump water they vented their displeasure in unintelligible Dutch, until Joseph Mickle's wife came to the pump and by the simple, familiar

device of pouring water down it caused its buckets to draw water. Their thirst quenched, the Hessians, without damage to Joseph Mickle's premises, marched on to their crushing defeat.

Lying directly opposite Philadelphia, Camden's territory was constantly overrun, and its farming population harassed and alarmed by detached parties of British soldiery skirmishing and foraging, taking what they wished. When the British fleet arrived at Philadelphia, their men-of-war anchored on the Pennsylvania side, while their convoys and tenders, numbering about one hundred, filled the Jersey channel, and cannon balls from their guns are preserved to-day, as valued relics, by the descendants of those along our shores, whom the wanton firing greatly alarmed if it did not much damage.

Although Camden is not distinguished as one of the battlefields of the Revolution, yet the ground on which the non-resisting followers of Fox have placed their humble meeting-house was twice the scene of warlike manoeuvres. In the early part of 1778, Gen. Anthony Wayne, being sent with a body of soldiers into the lower counties of our State to collect horses and cattle for the American army, with his usual fierce and bold aggressiveness soon made the enemy everywhere dread his onslaught; and Colonel Stirling, with a regiment of the Queen's Rangers, one of the best in the service, was sent to Haddonfield to watch him. Hearing that he had left Mount Holly to at-

tack them, the British, fully believing discretion to be the better part of valor when "Mad Anthony" was about, hastily retreated, never stopping until they reached, late at night, the shelter of their earthworks at Cooper's Point, although "the night was uncommonly severe and a cold sleet fell the whole way from Haddonfield to the ferry." Wayne pursued them with his usual impetuosity. The next morning, March 1st, 1778, the enemy sent out fifty picked men for some remaining forage three or four miles up the Haddonfield road, who were met by Wayne's advancing cavalry and forced to retreat. The Americans dashed on to the very lines of the British, drawn up between Sixth and Market streets and Cooper's Creek bridge. A sharp and spirited skirmish ensued, heavy firing being kept up by the British, from about where the Friends' meeting-house now stands, on the main body of the Americans, stationed in the woods along the Haddonfield road, which then intersected Market street at Broadway, where the Catholic church now is. The British, outnumbering the Americans ten to one, compelled them to retire to the woods, but without the loss of a man, although the British had several wounded and one sergeant of grenadiers killed. As the patriots retired, an officer reined up his steed and, "facing the Rangers as they dashed on, slowly waved his sword for his attendants to retreat. The English Light Infantry came within fifty yards of him, when one of them called out, 'You are a brave fellow, but you

must go away.' The undaunted officer, paying no attention to the warning, one McGill, afterwards a quartermaster, was ordered to fire at him. He did so, and wounded the horse, but the rider was unscathed, and soon joined his comrades in the woods a little way off."<sup>1</sup> This daring officer was the Count Pulaski.

Soon afterwards, in the same month, Pulaski, whilst reconnoitering with a body of horsemen, almost under the fortifications of the British, was only saved from an ambush, arranged by Colonel Shaw on both sides of old Cooper street, near the Friends' meeting-house, by William West, a patriot, apprised of the danger, who, seeing him riding down the road some distance ahead of his men, leading them into the trap, waved to him to retreat. Taking the hint, Pulaski at once wheeled his men and the ambuscade failed. Not so fortunate, however, was a party of militia that the British surprised about this time, at Cooper's Creek bridge, many, after a sharp fight, being killed and the rest taken prisoners. Soon afterwards the enemy evacuated Philadelphia, the scene of hostilities shifted, and our immediate neighborhood had little further annoyance from the Red-coats.

In June, 1777, the Trustees of Princeton College met at Cooper's Ferry, where they formally admitted the graduating class of 1776 to their Bachelor's degree, as of the Commencement in September of that year, a quorum of the Board not having been then

<sup>1</sup> Mickle, p. 51.

present. The announcement of their meeting in Camden, said to have been the only one held outside of Princeton under the stress of war, was made by President Witherspoon in the New Jersey Gazette of September 16th, 1778. Nassau Hall was occupied by the British as a barrack prior to January 3d, 1777, when Washington won the battle of Princeton, and afterwards was used as a hospital and a barrack by the Americans, which may account for the meeting of the College Trustees at Cooper's ferry.<sup>1</sup>

Long before the Revolution, Franklin spent a night within our present Camden, of which he tells in his famous autobiography. In October, 1723, being a boy of but seventeen, and on his way to Philadelphia to seek employment as a printer, he came across a boat at Burlington in the evening going to Philadelphia and went aboard of it. There being no wind, all, Franklin included, were forced to row the whole way. About midnight, fearing that they had passed the unlighted town, they put ashore, and, building a fire of fence rails, staid until morning, when they found they were in the mouth of Cooper's Creek, "a little above Philadelphia," where they arrived "about eight or nine o'clock on the Sunday morning and landed at the Market street wharf." Up which street, having bought "three great puffy rolls," he walked in his working clothes, "with a roll under each arm and eating the other," passing his future wife standing in the doorway of her

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<sup>1</sup> N. J. Archives, 2d Series, Vol. 2, p. 436.



father's house, who thought that he made "a most awkward, ridiculous appearance," which, he says, "I certainly did."

Washington, while President, at times crossed the Delaware to ride out the road from Cooper's Ferry. He last did so early in 1797, when he nearly frightened out of his wits a Dutchman, a Hessian deserter at the battle of Trenton, who said to him, "I tink I has seen your face before; vat ish your name?" The President, reining in his horse and bowing, said, "My name is George Washington." The Dutchman, thunderstruck, cried out, "Oh, mine Gott, I vish I vos unter te ice. I vish I was unter te ice. Oh, mine Gott." Washington reassured him and smilingly rode on.

Had Camden the choice of four great Revolutionary names to be associated with her history she could hardly have done better than Washington, Franklin, Wayne and Pulaski.

During the British occupancy of Philadelphia one of their cannon balls pierced the brick wall of the chimney of Joseph Kaighin's farm house, which stood at the southeast corner of Front street and Kaighn avenue, and rolled out on the hearth of the open fireplace. As a relic connecting Camden's history with the sterling men and stirring events of the Revolution it was exhibited at the great Sanitary Fair, held in Logan Square in Philadelphia, in 1864, which realized over \$1,000,000, in aid of the sick and wounded United States soldiers of the War of the Rebellion.

Paul Jones' famous warship, Alliance, launched just before the making of the treaty by which France became our ally in the Revolutionary War and named in honor of that event, was laid up shortly after the close of that war, on the east side of Petty's Island, near its southern end, where her remains yet were when Isaac Mickle published, in 1845, his valuable "Reminiscences of Old Gloucester." Barber and Howe, in their New Jersey Historical Collections, tell the following anecdote in the career of the Alliance: "In an encounter with a British vessel, a shot entered the corner of the Alliance's counter, and made its way into a locker, where all the china belonging to the captain was kept. An African servant of Commodore Barry, a great favorite, ran up to the quarter deck, and called out, 'Massa dat—Ingresse man broke all de chana!' 'You rascal,' said the Commodore, 'why did you not stop the ball?' 'Sha, massa, cannon-ball must hab a room.'"

"How they brought the good news from Ghent to Aix," the lovers of Robert Browning know. How they brought the good news from Ghent to America, of the signing at that town, on December 24th, 1814, of the treaty of peace, ending the war of 1812, the Americans first knew when the British sloop-of-war, Favorite, on February 11th, 1815, cast anchor in New York harbor, the glad tidings being confirmed two weeks later, when the schooner Transit brought the copy of the treaty. Afterwards the Transit, her sea-going

days over, was laid up on the northern end of the now removed Windmill Island, opposite Chestnut street, Philadelphia, with her stern toward the river, and on it painted the name "Messenger of Peace," remaining there as a pleasure house, Mickle says, until within a few years of his publication of his "Reminiscences of Old Gloucester."

Evidence of the growth of a pine forest over much of Camden's territory, later, by over a century, than the name Pyne Poynte, is furnished by Hill's "Map of Ten Miles Around Philadelphia," published in 1809, whereon all the territory between Broadway and Cooper's Creek and Federal and Line streets is marked "R. M. Cooper's Pine Field, 300 acres." Near the centre of that field in early days was a lake much frequented by wild geese and ducks, which, surrounded by the pine forest, is shown in an oil painting of it by a Philadelphia artist, as a picturesque body of water. So late as 1845, there were, according to Mickle, those who remembered when it contained several feet of water throughout the year. The cutting down of the trees surrounding the lake and the general clearing of the land along Cooper's Creek and Delaware River lowered their waters, causing that in the lake to be drained.

Of the oak forest that thickly covered the ground between Market and Main and Sixth and Eighth streets, quite a number of trees yet remain. They owe their preservation largely to the fact that in them was established and



kept for many years Diamond Cottage Garden, the last of the numerous public pleasure gardens that formerly were scattered over Camden. The Cottage, with its diamond-paned windows, stood partly across the south sidewalk of Penn street below Seventh street and was torn down in 1891. Several years before that the grounds had been abandoned as a public garden, but the trees were allowed to stand and their cool shade was freely enjoyed by the public and the place was popularly known as Diamond Cottage Park. The New Jersey State Agricultural Society held its fair in that woods in 1855, the only year its fair has been held in Camden.

The large elm tree standing in Cooper Park, just north of the Public Library, has a history. Richard M. Cooper, who lived in that house, had in his household a child's nurse whose family lived in Kensington, Philadelphia, near the Treaty Elm. Once on her return from a visit to them she brought with her a young sucker from that tree and planted it in his yard. It grew and flourished, and is the fine specimen adorning the Park to-day. A sucker from it is growing on the sidewalk on the north side of Penn street, just below Seventh street. So, Camden has living to-day both a child and a grandchild of the Penn Treaty elm.

For many years after the Revolution, Camden was a town only in name, and that only on paper, being called Cooper's Ferries, or simply The Ferries, until after the beginning

of this century. A few sales of lots had been made and a few houses began to cluster about the ferries, and a road or two more had been opened, but all else was farm or woodland.

When the Nineteenth century opened not a house of worship stood within the present limits of Camden. In 1801, however, the Friends, having decided to move their place of meeting from their old house on Newton Creek to a more central locality, built the brick meeting-house that stands at the corner of Mount Ephraim avenue and Mount Vernon street, the forerunner of Camden's present ninety churches; and next, in 1810, the Methodists dedicated their first church at the north-west corner of Fourth and Federal streets, long since converted into stores, followed, in 1818, by the First Baptist Church, on Fourth street, and thereafter the churches kept pace with Camden's growth.

The mode of ferriage across the Delaware in open boats, established as we have seen so early in our history, remained without change or improvement until 1809 or 1810, when a small steamboat, carrying passengers only, was placed on the river. She was named Camden and ran from the foot of Cooper street to the lower side of Market street, Philadelphia. In 1809 the ferry at Kaighn's Point was established by Joseph Kaighn (who dropped the last i in the name Kaighin because it had ceased to be pronounced) and soon a small steamboat, also carrying passengers only, and also, it is believed, called Camden, was



FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE (BUILT IN 1801)



placed on the line. Which of the two was the first steamboat is doubtful. After them came one called "The Twins," because she had two hulls clamped together with the wheel propelling her in the centre between them, a type used many years afterwards in the small steamboat, John Smith, which plied for a time between Arch street, Philadelphia, and the northern end of Windmill Island. After The Twins came the steamboat Rebecca, built in 1813, popularly known as "Aunt Becky," which ran from Cooper's Point to Arch street, and whose peculiarities were that she had a single propelling wheel astern, causing her to be further nicknamed "The Wheelbarrow," and had a wooden boiler, hooped like a cask, but, nevertheless, an effective one, since she frequently made her run in five minutes. Crude as were those early steamboats they were marvelous advances over the primitive wherries, open row boats built with double keels to enable them, when the river was partly frozen, to be drawn from the water and upon and along the ice until open water was again reached. But the passenger traffic across the river was too inconsiderable to keep up such a stride, and, after a few years, the ferrymen, taking in sail, adopted in summer the team boats, propelled by horses walking round a circle on a tread wheel, and stopping entirely for an hour at noon-time to feed the horses; and in the winter, when the ice in the river was not frozen solid, they fell back upon the old wherries. It was not until 1835 that

the steam ferryboat, regularly making its trips winter and summer alike, became firmly established as a fixture on the Delaware highway. When it was proposed to build a steamboat powerful enough to break through ice, "many declared it as impossible as it would be to propel a boat up Market street hill." But the old State Rights, with her eighty horse-power, and the ever larger, more powerful boats following her, culminating in those of to-day, carrying yearly some twelve millions of passengers to and fro across the Delaware without stoppage by the ice, prove the force of Kosuth's motto, "Nothing is impossible to him that wills."

In 1812 the village of Camden had become sufficiently important and known throughout the State to be named by the Legislature, in the act of January 12th of that year, establishing State banks, as one of the six towns authorized to do so. Under that act Camden's first bank was incorporated on June 16th, 1812, as "The President, Directors and Company of the State Bank at Camden." An unwieldy name which was quickly shortened in common parlance to The State Bank at Camden, and so retained until its conversion to a National bank on June 2d, 1865. After which its present name, The National State Bank of Camden, gradually attached itself. Not until sixty-one years after its start had Camden a trust company. The Camden Safe Deposit and Trust Company was incorporated on April 4th, 1873, and began business in July following. Camden's size,



and its importance as the financial centre of South Jersey has grown until now, 1909, three National banks and five trust companies find in it a good field for wise financial management, profitable to them and beneficial to its citizens, and to those of a widely surrounding circle.



## Chapter 2

Though Camden's early growth was very slow, and half a century after its birth it was but a small town, yet it had a vigor of self-assertion that compelled its recognition by the people of the county. The annual town meetings of Newton township had been held alternately here and at Haddonfield until 1827, when the Haddonfield people, conscious of their greater voting strength, at the town meeting, held regularly in turn at their place, resolved to shove Camden to the wall and thereafter to meet only at Haddonfield. Their superior number carried the question. But he laughs best who laughs last, and they unconsciously aroused the young giant that ever afterward whipped them in many a hard fought battle. The Camdenians left the town meeting very indignant, and Jeremiah Sloan, then a talented young lawyer of great promise, said to the Haddonfielders, "I'll fix you; I will have Camden incorporated next winter." He executed his threat, and at the next session of the Legislature the act was passed incorporating the city of Camden.

Thus it was that Camden, with a population of but 1,143, attained her legal majority with the right to manage her own affairs as she saw fit, free from the tutelage of country town meetings.

This first charter was passed February 13th, 1828, and is entitled "An act to incorporate a



part of the township of Newton, in the county of Gloucester." It has only eighteen sections, and, though but eighty-one years have passed, many of its provisions already sound quaint. It calls Broadway "the public road leading to Woodbury from the Camden Academy," and Newton avenue "the road leading from Kaighinton to Cooper's Creek bridge," and Petty's Island "Pethey's Island." It provides, in section 1, that the new city shall be called "The City of Camden," and then, in section 2, that the corporate name of the city shall be "The Mayor, Aldermen and Common Council of the City of Camden." The city officials were a Mayor, a Recorder, four Aldermen, five Common Councilmen and a Town Clerk. The Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen and Common Council, or a majority of them, of whom the Mayor or Recorder must be one, were authorized to hold a Common Council and to make ordinances and regulations for the well ordering and governing of the city. The Common Council were to be chosen at the annual town meetings on the second Monday in March and within six days thereafter they were to elect the Mayor.

The Recorder and Aldermen, as semi-judicial officers, were to be appointed by the Legislature "in joint meeting" in the same manner as justices of the peace were appointed and to continue in office for the same time (i. e. five years). The charter further provided that "one of the Aldermen and one of the Common Council shall always be a resident of

Kaighnton, and one of each of said officers shall always be a resident of the village commonly called 'William Cooper's Ferry.' " And that the Mayor, Recorder and Aldermen shall constitute a court to be styled "the Court of General Quarter Sessions of the Peace of the City of Camden," having within the city all the powers that the county courts of Quarter Sessions had or might have, excepting the granting of tavern licenses, and hearing appeals in pauper cases—a court abolished by the act of February 29th, 1856.

The new city was bounded by the Delaware River from the mouth of Cooper's Creek to the mouth of Little Newton Creek (by every one called Line Ditch), by it to the east side of Broadway, by it to the east side of Newton avenue, by it to the south side of Federal street, by it to the middle of Cooper's Creek and by it to the Delaware River.

At the first election for city officers, held March 10th, 1828, in town meeting at the Academy, which stood at Sixth and Market streets, where the George Genge public school now is, the following Common Councilmen were chosen: James Duer, from Cooper's Ferry; John Lawrence, Ebenezer Toole and Richard Fetters, from Camden, and Joseph Kaighn, from Kaighnton. James Duer and Joseph Kaighn declining to serve, at a special election held on the fifth of the following April, Edward Dougherty and Richard B. Champion were chosen in their place. The new Council held its first meeting on March 13th, 1828, and





FIRST COURT HOUSE AND CITY HALL

elected Samuel Lanning first Mayor of Camden.

The new municipality, however, had but little of the appearance of a city. The three villages of which it was composed—Camden proper, Cooper's Point and Kaighn's Point—remained separated by cultivated farms and by woods and retained their peculiar characteristics for many years. Extending but a short distance from the river, all the territory east of them to Cooper's Creek was as much country as any other part of the county, and where used for purposes of husbandry only, was, by the charter, exempted from taxation for the support of the city.

I cannot better contrast then and now than by bringing to light from the musty first minutes of Council two transactions. On April 23d, 1828, "The Council rented of Richard Feters for one year the room over his store for the purpose of a temporary Council and Court hall, for the sum of twenty-five dollars per annum or six dollars per quarter." And on June 5th, 1829, the committee appointed to make "a fair expose of the receipts and expenditures of the corporation up to this date," reported to Council that there had come into Samuel Lanning's hands \$3,456.23, and paid out by him \$3,512.49, leaving a balance due him of \$56.26.

The Common Council quickly acted to provide a permanent town hall by passing, on June 12th, 1828, an ordinance appointing Samuel Lanning, John K. Cowperthwaite and Rich-

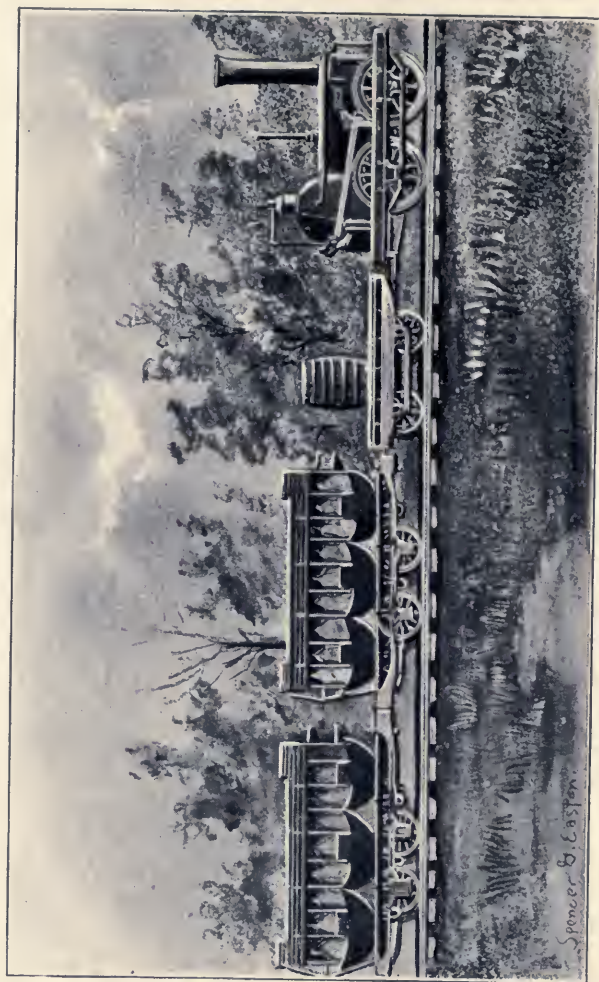
ard Feters commissioners to buy a lot and build a jail and court house "in the said city, agreeably to their best skill and understanding, and which may be the most judicious plan for our city," and authorizing them "to borrow from Jacob Evaul" (a farmer living a short distance outside of Camden) "\$2,500 at six per cent. interest" for that purpose. They purchased a lot on the south side of Federal street, below Fifth street, and built thereon a small, baldly plain, unpretentious stone and brick building, having on the ground floor "a jail or lock up" and on the second floor a court room, used also as a council chamber, reached by a wooden stairway on the outside of its Federal street front. As the only public hall in the city for over a quarter of a century, its court room was used for nearly every meeting of a public nature then held in Camden. On the building of our present City Hall, on Haddon avenue, the old hall was torn down in 1878, and in its place was built a large brick market house, which, in turn, was torn down in 1900 that the present fine office building of the Public Service Corporation might be built on its site.

The town having reached the dignity of a municipality, the name of its post-office, which from 1803 had been Cooper's Ferry, was changed on June 22d, 1829, to Camden.

About this time the desire for a more speedy conveyance than the old stage coach was cropping out in many places throughout the country, and very general inquiry was being made







FIRST RAILROAD TRAIN INTO CAMDEN



into the feasibility of railroads to meet the want. During 1827 the project of a railway to connect Philadelphia and New York began to be talked of in earnest. Meetings were held in the Camden Academy of those favoring the enterprise, preliminary surveys made, and such general interest excited as finally resulted in the Legislature granting, on February 4th, 1830, the charter for "The Camden and Amboy Railroad and Transportation Company." The company was soon organized and the road begun, and in January, 1834, the first train ran into Camden. This was a very marked event for the young city. The railroad was the longest then built in this country and its completion a matter of great rejoicing. People kept watch to see the trains arrive, even those as far off as Kaighn's Point, no houses then intervening, going to the tops of their houses to view the novel sight.

Hardly four years had passed after the incorporation of Camden, when some of her prominent citizens, on March 16, 1832, procured a charter for the incorporation of "The Camden Fire Insurance Company," a stock company, the preamble of which stated that sundry inhabitants of Camden City and its vicinity had represented to the Legislature that insurance on property in this State is frequently and to a large amount made in Philadelphia, and that an insurance company in Camden "would tend to the great convenience of the inhabitants and would confine at home a source of wealth which is yearly carried into another

State." The company continued in business for some years, but not proving so successful in confining at home the wealth its promoters hoped, an act of the Legislature was passed in 1849 creating Abraham Browning, Thomas H. Dudley and Isaiah Toy trustees to wind up its affairs. In 1841, The Camden Mutual Insurance Association was incorporated, and as the stock company into which it was converted in 1870 under an act of the Legislature, and under the name of The Camden Fire Insurance Association, which it adopted by certificate filed on February 3d, 1881, continues to-day, after The National State Bank, the oldest business corporation existent in Camden.

Jacob Cooper, in laying out Camden, planned the open square at the intersection of Third and Market streets for a market place similar to those in many towns in England. It was never so used and Camden never so fully adopted the system of open market sheds in the streets as did Philadelphia. In 1837 City Council caused a small one to be built on Third street immediately south of Market street, and in 1856 a second one to be erected in the center of Third street from Arch to Federal street. The last was removed in 1876 and the first shortly before it, to the great improvement of the street.

Not satisfied with being a city, Camden ere long began to think that there should be a new county created, with it as the shire-town, and actively pushed the project. This excited

great opposition throughout the county. Indignation meetings were held at Woodbury and other places. The Camden people had to fight almost unaided their uphill battle. They claimed it as a necessary measure "to accommodate the fast swelling population of the north and northwestern townships, and partly to secure to West Jersey her just share of influence in the State Government." At last, after a hard fight under the lead of Captain John W. Mickle, an uncompromising Democrat, they won and got the Legislature, which was Democratic, to pass, on March 13, 1844, under the plea that the new county would be Democratic, the act setting it off from Old Gloucester, and had it named after their own city, which was to be the seat of justice for one year and until an election could be had. But the people throughout the county were so incensed at the city's again foiling them that at the first election they voted, irrespective of party, against the Democratic nominees, recognizing no other issue than Camden and Anti-Camden, and for fifteen years the Democrats never carried the county. For many years afterwards, whenever Captain Mickle went to Trenton, he was taunted about his Democratic county; and to this day Camden county is politically anti-Democratic.

The same antagonism again cropped out at the permanent fixing of the county seat. The act creating Camden county required that its courts should be held at the Court House in Camden for one year, when, at an election to

be fixed by the Freeholders, the location of the county seat was to be determined by a majority vote. Camden, of course, nominated herself and supported her nomination with great unanimity. The rest of the county was divided in its choice. At the election held on August 12th, 1845, to determine the question, Camden received 1,062, Gloucester 822, Haddonfield 422, and Mount Ephraim 33 votes. No place receiving a majority, a statute was approved April 1st, 1846, providing for two elections. At the first a majority of votes was necessary to a choice. If no place received a majority then a second election was to be had at which a plurality would decide the question. No place having received a majority at the first election held under that Act, a second one was had, when the county united on Long-a-Coming (Berlin) and gave it 1,498 votes while Camden received but 1,434 votes. But the Camdenians would not stay down, and in 1848, aided largely by the able pugnacity of the late Abraham Browning, of honored memory, after continued defeats in the courts had a statute passed, directing a new election. The fourth fight was fourfold bitter. Again it was the whole of the country against the city. But Camden had well encased herself in armor against the shafts of her opponents in her unaided tilt against the field, and came out victorious with a vote of 2,444 against 795 for Haddonfield and 705 for Long-a-Coming. This last election definitely settled the contest, the country





SECOND COURT HOUSE



people submitted to the inevitable, and to-day admit that, however unfairly it may have been made, the choice was a wise one.

Immediately after the settlement of this question a strong rivalry sprang up over the location of the court house between John W. Mickle, president of the Federal Street Ferry Company, and Abraham Browning, heavily interested with his brothers in the Market Street Ferry, founded by their father, Abraham Browning, each striving to have it placed on the street leading to the ferry in which he was interested, in the hope of turning to that ferry the trend of travel. The struggle was finally settled by putting the Court House equi-distant from each ferry. And that is the reason it was built where it was, on the lot nearest to the ferries that extended from Federal to Market street, and placed exactly midway between the two streets.

The beneficent effect of building and loan associations, the first of which is said to have been created in 1815 by the canny Scotch and the system to have been introduced into our country about the year 1840, was early grasped by the thrifty, intelligent business and working men of Camden. The New Jersey statute authorizing the incorporation of them was approved February 28th, 1849, and two months had hardly passed, when on May 5th, 1849, The Camden Building Association was incorporated under it, followed on March 2d, 1851, by The South Ward Building and Loan Association. And thereafter the associations



grew continually until to-day some thirty odd of them in our city flourishingly demonstrate their value in aiding their members to acquire homes, to invest with profit their savings, and to educate themselves in determining the values of real estate, and in safely investing money therein.

Of the two public utilities, water and gas, water was first furnished to Camden by a private corporation. The Camden Water Works Company supplied from its pipes on November 1st, 1846, the first public water to the city, continuing to do so until the city purchased its plant and took possession thereof on July 1, 1870. Somewhat more than six years followed the introduction of public water before gas for lighting was furnished, which has always been supplied by a private corporation. The Camden Gas Light Company lighted the city in that way for the first time on Christmas night, 1852, a year noted also for the completion on Market street and on Federal street of the first paving of the roadway of any of the city streets, cobble stones being used for the purpose.

In 1850 Camden obtained a new charter with enlarged powers but no increase of territory, divided, however, into three wards, North, Middle and South, and began to grow with considerable energy, until the horrible burning of the ferryboat New Jersey, on the night of March 15th, 1856, with its holocaust of sixty-one lives, at once checked migrations from Philadelphia, while the panic of 1857 fol-

lowing, completed the blow to its prosperity. Then the doubt and uncertainty of the impending rebellion, and the exhaustion of the struggle when entered upon, protracted the stagnation, and our city lay in a torpor until late after the collapse of the war the prosperous times thawed it into new life, that, bursting the chrysalis of the boundaries of its original incorporation of 1828, reached out and grasped, under its revised charter of 1871, new territory, increasing its size three fold. So that it covered all the territory between the Delaware River and Cooper's Creek on the river front, as far south as the mouth of Newton Creek, up which the boundary ran eastward to its north branch, and up it to the Mount Ephraim road, thence up to Ferry avenue, along which and the continuation thereof in a right line it extended to Cooper's Creek; very nearly the boundaries of the island Aquikanasra as noted and mapped by both the Dutch and the Swedes in their early surveys of the Delaware.

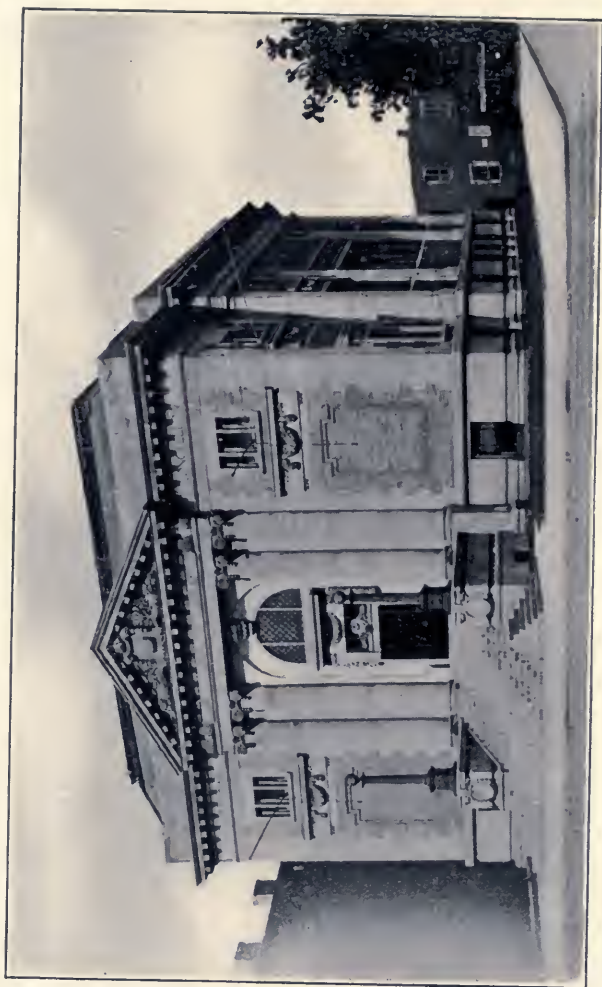
To tell the whole story of the tried loyalty of Camden's citizens in the struggle of 1861-65 for the maintenance of the Union would take many pages, but that history must not pass unnoted. The thrill of indignant patriotism that instantaneously ran through the North, when rebellion fired its first shot on Fort Sumter, fusing all citizens alike into the Union Party for the sustaining of the Government, caused 116 of Camden's citizens, headed by Dr. Isaac S. Mulford, a Friend, to send

to President Lincoln on April 16th, 1861, four days after that first shot was fired, a stirring address in which they "declare our unalterable determination to sustain the government in its efforts to maintain the honor, the integrity and the existence of our National Union and the perpetuity of the popular government, and to redress the wrongs long enough endured, no differences of political opinion, no badge of diversity upon points of party distinction, shall restrain or withhold us in the devotion of all we have or can command to the vindication of the Constitution, the maintenance of the laws and the defence of the Flag of our Country."

Two days afterwards, on April 18th, a great Union meeting was held at the Court House, presided over by John W. Mickle, whose Democracy was only exceeded by his patriotism, and who closed his short opening speech by saying "That flag has got to go up." Just one week later, on April 25th, four companies of volunteers went to Trenton to report to Governor Olden. They were the Washington Grays, Captain E. Price Hunt; the Camden Light Artillery, Captain Isaac W. Mickle; the Stockton Cadets, Captain Edmund G. Jackson, and the Camden Zouaves, Captain John R. Cunningham.

Camden, having by the census of 1860 a population of 14,368, followed that first enthusiastic rally by sending, during the war, over 2,500 men to the Union army and navy, a contribution of very nearly one-fifth of its entire population to the struggle for a united country.





PUBLIC LIBRARY—MAIN BUILDING

The superiority of a well organized paid service for the extinguishment of fires over an unorganized volunteer one, composed of many independent separate fire companies with their turbulent jealousies and rivalries, so impressed itself on City Council that, by ordinance passed on September 2d, 1869, it organized Camden's well managed fire department.

In the year 1871, when the Camden Horse Railroad Company started its passenger cars, came what all had been hoping for, public conveyances enabling everyone to ride from one end of the city to the other, so evidently supplying a public want that the West Jersey Press was enabled thus exultantly to describe the opening of the lines to public travel: "Federal street had a huge load of excitement to stagger under on Saturday last, and the street was crowded with spectators from early morn to dewy eve, while the curbstone corners in particular were the resorts of shouting boys and wondering men. A long wished for event came to pass, and a new era in the growth of the city's conveniences was successfully inaugurated. In a word the new horse cars began to run. Let us mark the date, November 25th, 1871. Such occurrences as these are mile posts in the history of our city's progress, and should be recorded as worthy of special eclat."

The effort for the establishment of a library in Camden began almost with the incorporation of the city. The Worthington Library



Company organized as early as February, 1838; the Camden Literary and Library Association organized January 23d, 1852; the Camden Library Company, incorporated March 19th, 1878, and the various church libraries, attest to efforts made to fill the need felt by many Camdenians for the instruction, the stimulus and the pleasure of books. But, none of these library associations were permanent, and their books disappeared when they did. It was not until the voluntary free public library, opened on November 28th, 1898, in the old family mansion in Cooper Park, and, with aid from the city, carried on there for four years, so educated the people to the value to be gained from free libraries, that they adopted, at the election held in November, 1902, the provisions of New Jersey's free library law, taxing themselves one-third of a mill on every dollar of their assessable property for the support of a library. Thus the free library became a permanent feature of Camden, allowing her to take her position in line with the other advanced cities and towns of New Jersey that had adopted that statute. Then, with Andrew Carnegie's gift of \$120,000 for proper library buildings, was built the Main Library at Broadway and Line street, opened on June 27th, 1905, and the East Branch, opened on June 18th, 1906, and also was remodelled and enlarged the Cooper Branch, reopened on September 10th, 1907; each building an ornament to its locality.





PUBLIC LIBRARY—COOPER BRANCH

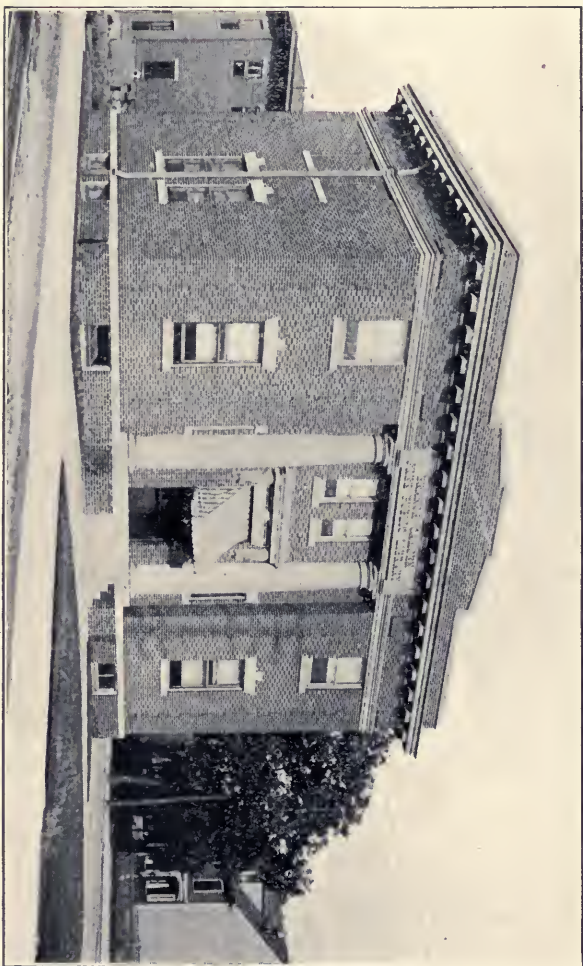


From a desire for political or territorial aggrandizement, towns at times seek contiguous smaller ones that, having acquired a distinctive life of their own, which they prize, surrender it only under compulsion. But, that charge cannot be brought against Camden in its next increase of territory. At the request of the inhabitants of the town of Stockton, conscious that their prosperity and happiness would be enhanced thereby, was passed the act of March 24th, 1899, annexing that town to the city of Camden, enlarging its boundary one-third and its population one-sixth. And so fitting and complete was the amalgamation that that addition is to-day as blended a part of the life of the city as is any other section of its territory. So much so that on the locating of the free library buildings one was placed in that new territory without dissent.

Grown metropolitan in size and importance, the time had come in the judgment of City Council for Camden to be no longer without a coat of arms, and it invited the Camden County Historical Society to suggest one. The Society did so with the motto "Virtus et Industria." Council adopted both suggestions on February 28th, 1907. The design is a shield, the dexter half containing the arms of Lord Camden, the sinister half an antique ship in the stocks ready for launching, indicative of Camden's shipbuilding industries; supporters personifying industry and knowledge; the old locomotive that first ran into Camden, emblematic of the city of to-day, the great railroad

centre of West Jersey; Lord Camden's crest, and the pine tree springing from it, typifying the primeval forest that covered so much of Camden's territory and recalling the origin of its first name, Pyne Poynte.





PUBLIC LIBRARY—EAST BRANCH



## Chapter 3

Of incidents historic and biographic in Camden's life the setting down of a few may make more vivid its retrospect.

The establishment of the first bank of issue in New Jersey, if not in America, almost at Camden's door, is closely enough connected with her first settlers to be named as the earliest of such incidents. Mark Newbie, who lived, Mickle says, on the farm afterwards owned by Joseph B. Cooper, where is now the Borough of Wood-Lynne, and Judge Clement says, on the Champion road just west of the West Collingswood railroad station, brought with him from London a large number of copper coins, made in Ireland by the Roman Catholics after the massacre there in 1641 and known as Patrick's half-pence. The New Jersey Assembly in May, 1682, by statute authorized their circulation by Newbie as currency and made them a legal tender to the amount of five shillings, provided he, Mark, should give security for their redemption on demand, which he did by mortgaging for that purpose 300 acres of his land. And so the much needed currency was for several years supplied to Camden's pioneers and to their neighbors. Those coins are now very rare and not to be found except in a few numismatic collections.

The honor of being the first place in the United States to form a Republican Club is



claimed for Camden with force. At the Republican National Convention, held in Philadelphia in 1856, that priority was awarded to Michigan, it being shown that such a club was formed in that State in May, 1854. Framington, Massachussetts, also claims to have formed one in the same month. But, the Jefferson Republican Club of Camden was organized April 6th, 1854, at the old Camden City Court House, by the election of Joseph M. Cooper, as president; Edward N. Dougherty, as secretary, and Dr. Sylvester Birdsall as treasurer. It really had its start in the old South Ward (now the Fifth and Sixth Wards), in the summer of 1852, when a number of Whigs declared themselves for Hale and Julian, the candidates for President and Vice President of the Free Soil Party. At the election in November following, South Ward cast 18 votes for that ticket, while Middle and North Wards each cast but one vote for it. So belongs to Camden the first Republican club of our country and to old South Ward the impetus from which it sprang.

Not alone in that priority in matters of State and of National public interest has Camden rested content. If with none others of such broad import, with those of local consequence, in leading her own life, she has led her great sister Philadelphia. She established her first building and loan association more than a year before Philadelphia grasped the value of the system. Philadelphia, with market sheds yet in her streets, clings to what Camden deemed,

more than thirty years ago, unsightly and unclean. For a year after Camden adopted and inaugurated her paid fire department Philadelphia remained content with the antiquated volunteer fire companies. The trolley system for street cars developed on Market street, Camden, its superiority over horse cars for that public service some time before Philadelphia awakened to the importance of Camden's demonstration. In the fall of the year 1897 the supplying of pure water to Camden from its plant of artesian wells at Delair was inaugurated, giving a quality of water unsurpassed, if equalled, by any city, cool enough when direct from the hydrant to be pleasantly potable in the hottest weather and so pure as to have driven typhoid fever practically from the city. Its fame has spread to the Orient, and so impressed the United States Minister at Bangkok ("City of wild fruit trees"), Capital of Siam, a city he estimates of 1,000,000 inhabitants, that on January 4th, 1909, he wrote to the Camden Water Department for copies of its report for the year 1908. No part of Philadelphia had filtered water in the year 1897, nor for several years afterward, and sections of it struggled with the factory refuse, coal dust and sewage-laden Schuylkill and Delaware River waters until the spring of 1909, when filtered water was finally supplied to all its parts.

In citizens of broad charity and public spirit Camden has not lacked from its start. Within three years of his planning the town, Jacob

Cooper, on April 22d, 1776, for the nominal consideration of five shillings, conveyed to Charles Lyons and others, trustees "for building a place of public worship and a burying ground," lot 127 at the northwest corner of Fifth and Arch streets, now occupied by fire houses, and lots 158 and 159 at the northwest corner of Sixth and Arch streets. And, on June 23, 1804, his grandchildren supplemented his gift of the latter lots by deeding the adjoining lots 156 and 157, at the southwest corner of Sixth and Market streets to Edward Smith and William Flintham, of Philadelphia, and George Genge and Thomas Ackley, of Camden, in trust "to build thereon and maintain a school house, and a dwelling house for a teacher." The lot at Fifth and Arch streets was used as a "burying ground" for many years, but there had been no burials there for a long time prior to the building of the first fire house thereon. No "place of public worship" was built on the lots at the corner of Sixth and Arch streets. The Academy, however, was built by subscription on the lots at the corner of Sixth and Market streets, and stood there for nearly sixty years, accommodating schools and public gatherings. The "dwelling house for a teacher" was never built. George Genge, one of the trustees for the Academy lot, by his will, dated September 28th, 1828, bequeathed to the trustees of Camden Academy an annuity of eighty dollars "to the only and exclusive use of paying the education of poor children in the Academy, or

other school house erected on either of the two lots, 156 and 157." By an act of the Legislature, approved March 2d, 1854, that annuity was authorized to be extinguished by the payment to those trustees of the sum of \$1,333.34, the principal producing it at six per centum interest per annum. By a subsequent act, approved March 15th, 1854, the trustees were authorized to convey the Academy lot and premises to the Board of Education of the City of Camden, to be by it held "so long as the same are used by the said board exclusively for the purpose of education," and were directed to pay to it prior to the delivery of such deed all the moneys held by them as such trustees to be by it used for public school purposes. The public school being free to all children the charitable object of George Genge was thus faithfully perpetuated. Because of that bequest the present school house on that lot, built in 1863, was fittingly named George Genge School.

Joseph Kaighn, one of Camden's principal citizens, who started in 1809 the first ferry to Philadelphia from Kaighn's Point, who was president of the original Federal street ferry from its start in 1836 until his death in 1841; who, for several years, was in the Legislature as a representative and as a Senator; and who took an active part in all things concerning Camden's best movements, gave the valuable lot of ground on which the Kaighn school now stands. He greatly aided, without pay, his cousin, Sarah Kaighn, in her business

affairs, who to compensate him offered to convey to him that lot. He asked her to convey it instead to the public for school purposes. She did so, by deed to him and others in trust, dated March 8th, 1821. The deed was hers but the gift was his.

Richard M. Cooper, president of The State Bank at Camden from 1813 until 1842, when he declined a re-election, died March 10th, 1844, leaving a large landed estate in the upper part of Camden, which his bachelor twin sons, Dr. Richard M. Cooper and Lawyer William D. Cooper so successfully managed that, when they died, respectively, in the year 1874 and in the year 1875, the estate had grown to be a very valuable one. Dr. Cooper was one of Camden's leading physicians, whose professional knowledge and experience taught him the importance of a good hospital and its aid to the community. His brother, William, agreed with him in the value of a hospital, and together they hoped that the estate they inherited, and which had so increased under their charge, might be devoted to the establishment and maintenance of one in Camden. They died before their accomplishment of that hope. But their maiden sisters, Sarah W. Cooper and Elizabeth B. Cooper, their devisees, knowing their wish, carried it into effect by procuring from the Legislature the charter for "The Camden Hospital," approved March 24th, 1875, and the giving to it of \$200,000 in money and the conveying to it, by them and their brother







SECOND CITY HALL



Alexander Cooper, of the very valuable lot of land now occupied by the hospital.

In 1877 the main building of the hospital was completed; in 1903 the nurses' home was built and in 1907 the north wing to the main building was added. The Cooper sisters consented to the urgent request of the hospital trustees, that they might apply to the Legislature for an act changing the corporate name to "The Cooper Hospital," the name by which it had become popularly known, and on March 6th, 1877, the act making such change was approved. That its endowment might be increased by the addition of the income thereof to the principal, its opening was delayed until August 11th, 1887. Since then its beneficent work, aided by the liberal gifts of \$100,000 by John W. Wright, nephew of the founders; of \$50,000 by William B. Cooper, of \$10,000 by Judge John Clement and of \$21,000 by Jane B. Chambers, in the name of her father, Joseph Bedlam, and the gifts of generous endowers of beds has gone on to the great good of all South Jersey.

Jesse W. Starr, one of Camden's leading manufacturers, who with his brother, ex-Congressman John F. Starr, established and most successfully carried on for many years the Camden Iron Works, whose residence was near the centre of beautifully laid-out grounds bounded by Newton avenue, Haddon avenue and Line street, gave to Camden, by deed dated July 10th, 1871, the land on which the City Hall stands, upon condition that such a

hall should be begun thereon within three years and be completed within five years, and that that ground should always be used for a City Hall and public park, and if it should cease to be so used it should revert to him and his heirs. There were then no houses in that neighborhood east of the west side of Broadway, nor between Newton avenue and the Camden and Amboy Railroad, and the site seemed so in the open country that Council delayed the acceptance of the gift until 1874, just before the expiration of the time limited for the commencement of the building of a hall, when against the strongly-expressed wishes of many citizens it built the present one. On July 2d, 1874, Mr. Starr gave to the city, by deed, the land on which the Soldiers' Monument stands, and upon the same condition. Wishing to own the land free of the condition, Camden, on December 20th, 1883, paid to Mr. Starr \$10,831.89 for an absolute conveyance of all the land bounded by Haddon avenue, Washington street and Seventh street.

Other instances of public spirit on the part of her people might well be cited to show that Camden has never lacked citizens who felt their duty to their fellow-men and whose loyalty thereto made them glad to contribute what they could to aid her public weal.

From the effort of the North Ward Bounty Association, formed, near the close of the War of the Rebellion, to raise money to pay bounties to volunteers to serve in the place



THIRD COURT HOUSE



of its members who might be drafted for the army, The Camden City Dispensary had its origin. At Lee's surrender, in 1865, that Association had in its treasury a balance which it resolved should be used for charity. Col. Thomas McKeen, its treasurer, strongly urged that the money be given for the establishment of a dispensary, and after consultation with members of The Camden County Medical Society that was decided to be done. A committee of the Association, aided by one of the Medical Society, purchased the Perseverance Hose House, then standing on the east side of Third street, below Market street. The Camden City Dispensary was incorporated February 5th, 1867. It received from that draft fund \$3,776.94 and carried on its good work in the old hose house until that was sold in 1890, when the Dispensary was moved to its present building, No. 725 Federal street, which it built in 1891 and where, aided by bequests, and an annual appropriation from City Council, it freely administers to all needing its aid.

The Camden Home for Friendless Children was incorporated April 6th, 1865, and was formally opened on May 30th, 1865. The first child was admitted May 8th, 1865. The West Jersey Orphanage for Destitute Colored Children was incorporated February 17th, 1874, and opened January 20th, 1875. Each of those charities since its opening has unostentatiously carried on its good work.

Several dwelling houses in Camden are over one hundred years old. The old yellow house at Point and Erie streets, built in 1734, as the stone in its gable end mutely testifies, was the headquarters of the British General Abercrombie while Philadelphia was occupied by the British during the Revolutionary War. The one-and-a-half-story stone house occupied by the Pyne Poynt Library is probably older than that old yellow house, but there is no record of the date of its erection. The old Kaighin homestead, at the southeast corner of Second and Sycamore streets, originally two stories high in its centre with a one-story wing at each end, with its length parallel with the river, was built between 1700 and 1710 of bricks brought from England. Much older than a century is the old stone farm house on the river bank just below Jasper street, the birthplace of Isaac Mickle, whose "Reminiscences of Old Gloucester" has been truly said have been written "With a wealth of erudition and classic allusion that makes the book to this day one of the most readable contributions to our local history."<sup>1</sup>

An interesting memento of a long past is the hexagonal mile stone in front of St. John's Protestant Episcopal Church, at the curbstone on Broadway, just above Royden street. Good taste has kept and it is to be hoped long will keep it, where it was first set, then on the "Woodbury road" in front of a farm field.

<sup>1</sup> William Nelson's address before N. J. Historical Society, May 16, 1895.





OLD MILE STONE





The inscription on it, cut long before our town was known as Camden, is :

“1 Mile to Coop’s Fy’s  
to Salem.”

The distance to Salem has become obliterated, but the rest of its lettering is clear.

The first Camden county courts were held in the old city court house on Federal street. Small and homely in its lack of any architectural merit, as great a contrast to the chaste charm of our present beautiful Court House as it is possible for any building to be, it answered the purpose for a decade, or until the county built the old Court House on Broadway, the corner-stone of which was laid on June 26th, 1852, and which was torn down in 1903 to make room for the present one, the corner-stone of which was laid on August 18th, 1904, and the beauty and harmony of whose perfect dome and every outline is a continued joy to view.

New Jersey, happily not a land of earthquakes, is not without their experience. Smith, in his “History of New Jersey,” states that, in November, 1726, a small one was felt between the hours of ten and eleven at night; that on September 5th, 1732, “about noon a small shock of earthquake was felt”; that on December 7th, 1737, “at night was a large shock of earthquake, accompanied with a remarkable rumbling noise; people waked in their beds, the doors flew open, bricks fell from the chimneys, the consternation was serious, but happily no

great damage ensued"; and that November 18th, 1755, "at four o'clock in the morning, was a considerable shock of an earthquake, which lasted about two minutes. \* \* \* It did not begin with so much of a rumbling noise as that in 1737, but was thought not to fall short in the concussion." One hundred and twenty-nine years after Smith's last record Camden experienced an earthquake. It came on Sunday afternoon, August 10th, 1884, a clear day, about ten or twelve minutes past two o'clock, without rumble or other warning, in three distinct tremors, the last lighter than the first two and was over in a few seconds. The walls of strong stone houses shook perceptibly and the bells in large brick houses rang. People walking along the street appeared not to notice it, but to many within well-built houses the sensation of irresistible trembling of floors and distinct shaking of stout walls gave a feeling of instability never before experienced. The earthquake was very general over the Eastern United States, toppling over chimneys, but doing little other damage.

A year afterwards, on Monday, August 3d, 1885, a terrible wind cyclone, twice crossing the Delaware, swept over Camden between the river and Sixth street, from Kaighn's Point to Cooper's Point, killing five persons and seriously wounding over thirty others, unroofing houses, schools, churches and buildings of every kind, and demolishing large parts of their walls. It followed a rain of several hours, but did not last more than five minutes,





SMITH'S ISLAND—WINDMILL ISLAND  
As seen from Philadelphia

yet in that time it was estimated that, in addition to the deaths and wounding of many people, the loss to property amounted to from a half a million to a million of dollars. As it passed his shipyard at Kaighn's Point, John H. Dialogue saw a huge ball of fire, looking to him to be ten feet in diameter, accompany the storm and explode about two hundred and fifty yards north of him with a report that shook the foundations of the buildings in his shipyard. At the time the sky eastward of the narrow belt of the cyclone was unusually bright with a rainbow effect.

The most prominent feature in the view over the Delaware from Camden's shore for more than a century prior to its removal by the United States Government, in 1894, in its improvement of the channel of the river, was Windmill Island, extending, at its removal, from about opposite Berkley street to about opposite Arch street, with bars at each end, extending southward to Line street and northward to nearly opposite Linden street, and originally to the fast land at Cooper's Point. Shown as a bar in 1681 on Holm's map of the Delaware river, it had grown to be a firm island in the middle of the next century, when John Harding built on it a windmill, whence its name. And, later, when Joseph Wright, of Philadelphia, in 1786, established his ferry from Robert Waln's wharf below the drawbridge over Dock creek (now Dock street), Philadelphia, to Camden, he made on the island a landing where he

erected a half-way house and published that "Passengers would always meet with hearty welcome and a hospitable fire in the cold season to warm and refresh themselves while waiting for an opportunity of evading those large fields of ice which generally float up and down with the tide and obstruct the passage during winter." A graphic glimpse of the difficulty besetting the crossing of the Delaware in the open wherries when the cold was not severe enough to so freeze it as to enable it to be crossed on the ice. A difficulty intensified in stormy weather when umbrellas, were they then used, could not have been raised lest they impede the boats. Edward Sharp, in 1820, tried to solve the problem of a better crossing of the river by a bridge to be built from Camden to the island, so that only the narrow channel between it and Philadelphia would have to be crossed by a ferry. In his furtherance thereof he laid out Bridge avenue one hundred feet wide on his plan of the continuation of "Camden Village," from which his bridge, that, from want of financial aid, never materialized, was to start. When the Camden and Amboy Railroad was built, and its Philadelphia landing fixed at the foot of Walnut street, near the location, in 1786, of Joseph Wright's ferry landing, the island was such an impediment to the crossing of the river by its boats, that the company procured from the Pennsylvania Legislature authority to cut a canal through it. Begun in 1837, finished in 1838, the canal was kept open so







WALT WHITMAN'S TOMB

long as the island remained in the river. In the nineteenth century, Thomas Smith became the owner of the northern end of the island, and he and his heirs held the ownership and kept there a public garden until within a few years of its removal, so that it became commonly called Smith's Island during all the latter years of its existence.

Besides Camden's association with Washington, Franklin, Wayne and Pulaski, there is linked with its history the names of four other noted men of widely-different fame.

The great Indian chief, Tammany, patron saint of that powerful organization of the New York City Democracy bearing his name, died on Pea Shore, according to a tradition so firmly fixed that it is but emphasized in the location, by the Tammany Fishing Club, for many years of its club house there, now within the city limits. Until shortly before the nineteenth century a forest stood along the Delaware River, between Bridge avenue and Line street, called by a name singularly like Tammany's woods.<sup>1</sup> The eccentric Colonel David Crockett, then a Representative in Congress from Kentucky, stopped at Camden on his way to Washington in 1831 or 1832, staying at the hotel of Isaiah Toy, afterwards and until it was torn down, in 1882, well known as Parsons' Hotel, which stood on the north side of Federal street just above Front street, then close to the ferry landing. While there Crockett went with some friends to a shooting

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<sup>1</sup> Mickle, pp. 19, 46.

match held near the present Court House, then in full view of the Camden and Amboy (now Pennsylvania) Railroad. As he was shooting, the first locomotive of that road passed. Gazing at it in wonder he exclaimed, "Hell in harness!" The distinguished ornithologist, John James Audubon, lived for a short time in a small two-and-a-half story brick house that stood on the south side of Cooper street, nearly opposite Friends' avenue, and was torn down in 1901. Walt Whitman's home in Camden for the last nineteen year of his life, from 1873 to 1892, has made it known and linked its name with his fame, wherever his "Leaves of Grass" is read. His plain old-fashioned two-story frame house, No. 328 Mickle street, and his tomb, in beautiful Harleigh Cemetery, designed by himself, striking in its massive simplicity, are the two points of interest sought by all his admirers visiting Camden.



WALT WHITMAN'S HOME



## Chapter 4

Around Camden cling aboriginal legend and pioneer romance enriching her story of the past.

David Peterson De Vries, the Dutch commander, who first came to New Jersey in 1631, with a colony of thirty-four Dutch settlers, left them at Fort Nassau (near Gloucester Point), and returned to Holland. During his absence, the colonists raised over the fort his standard, which an Indian stole and for which they hung him. That, with outrages committed on the Indian wives, so exasperated the Indians that they massacred the whole Dutch settlement, and when De Vries returned, in 1632, he found no sign of his colonists except their bones. The Indians charged with the massacre confessed it with much pretended penitence. De Vries, being in sore need of food, and in no condition to punish them, made a new treaty with them for a supply of venison and corn. Pretending to fulfill their agreement the Indians decoyed De Vries from Fort Nassau and up Timmerkill (Cooper's Creek) with his vessel and crew on the pretence that on that stream provision was stored. Sailing up the creek he came to anchor near Red Hill, or Ward's Mount, in Forest Hill Park. In the hearing of a young Indian mother, whom they thought slept, the Indians planned to waylay and slay the Dutch when they landed. The young mother, of unknown name, in her quick-



witted mercy and brave determination to save the palefaces from the doom designed for them, rivalled Pocahontas, and so soon as the conference of the chiefs ended, at the risk of her life, went in the night to the creek, paddled in a canoe to De Vries' vessel and told him of the plot. So warned, he sailed back at once to Fort Nassau to find that, expecting his slaughter up the creek, the Indians were in possession of the empty fort. Concealing their surprise they came in their canoes and surrounded his vessel. Deeming it prudent not to attack them, De Vries said to them the Great Spirit had told him of their treachery, and before he was directed to use on them the thunder of his swivel gun they had better leave. They did so, and De Vries soon after sailed out of the Delaware, abandoning the effort of the Dutch to colonize New Jersey.<sup>1</sup> A well-told story, founded on this incident, entitled "Mahala, a Legend of New Jersey," was published in Miss Leslie's Magazine in 1843, and reprinted in the West Jersey Press, on March 1st, 1876.

Though Elizabeth Haddon's home, after emigrating to New Jersey, was first at Coles' Landing on Cooper's Creek, and afterwards at Haddonfield, her close social and religious association with Camden's first settlers, she and they alike worshipping in the same Friends' log meeting-house at what is now West Collingswood railroad station, and her niece Mary Estaugh marrying Joseph Kaighin, son of John Kaighin, the emigrant, causes her

<sup>1</sup> Gordon's History of New Jersey, p. 9.

romance to so linger about their lives as to justify its mention as fittingly a part of Camden's story. Read in Lydia Maria Childs' "Tale of the Youthful Emigrant" how John E'staugh, a young minister on a religious visit from England to America, found favor in her sight; how by simple device she detained him behind the others of the cavalcade of Friends, on their way to Salem Quarterly Meeting, and with all maidenly modesty confessed to him in Friendly phraseology her love for him; how he, poor, with her young, beautiful and rich, blushing as she offered herself was coy, claiming that he came solely on a religious visit from which that subject might distract his mind; how he held his advantage by saying, "When I have discharged the duties of my mission we will speak farther"; how nothing more was then said by them on that nearest to their hearts and John returned to England, and how, when away from her, he quickly appreciated what he was missing and returned the following fall and married her. Then read Longfellow's poem "Elizabeth," and there will be told the legend which has gathered as a halo around Elizabeth Haddon's life, clinging too closely for criticism to dissipate and brighter growing with the passing years.

No more prosaic part of Camden can now be found than the crossing of the railroad over Federal and Twelfth streets. But at the commencement of the Eighteenth century it was an attractive spot, as romantic a Gretna Green as could well be chosen. Near there the public road from Gloucester to Burlington, cross-

ing Cooper's Creek at Spicer's Ferry, met the roads from the two Cooper's Ferries under the tall pine forest covering the land for many an acre thereabout. Very early one day in the year 1707, Sarah Eckley, a rich young Friend of Philadelphia, and Colonel Daniel Coxe, a young Church of England man on the staff of Lord Cornbury, Governor of New Jersey, crossed the Delaware and were married by the Lord's chaplain "between two and three in the morning."<sup>1</sup> The meeting of those roads where Cooper street now ends has been located as the place "on the Jersey Side" where that marriage took place, upon the probability that Colonel Coxe, knowing that Lord Cornbury, accompanied by his chaplain, would then be on his return to Burlington, from holding court at Gloucester, planned to intercept him as if by accident where the roads from the Cooper's Ferries entered the King's Highway. Imagination may easily bring back the picturesque sight—the tall pine trees, the ground covered with their needles, the yet dark of night, Lord Cornbury and attendants, Indians in silent wonder at the unfamiliar ceremony, the young couple before the chaplain, and the glow of the wood fire through the deep forest casting over all its illumination. Colonel Coxe, after his romantic marriage, had his home in Burlington, was Governor of New Jersey, and studying law became a judge of the Supreme Court of the State, continuing so until his death, in 1739. "He lived," says Judge Field,

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<sup>1</sup> Watson's Annals.

“to enjoy the confidence and respect of the community, and his judicial duties appear to have been discharged with ability and integrity.” He was the originator of the plan of union of the North American Colonies afterwards suggested by Franklin, called the “Albany Plan of Union,” proposing it in a pamphlet he issued to induce settlers to remove to New Jersey. His sister, who was said to have promoted his runaway match with the young Quaker, Sarah Eckley, was the wife of William Trent, then of Philadelphia, who later purchased from Mahlon Stacy the land whereon the city of Trenton is now built, moved there, gave it his name and, though not a lawyer, became Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New Jersey.

Such, brokenly told, is Camden’s story of the past. To-day, with a territory of some twelve square miles, with a population of 93,000, and growing steadily, it is the fourth city in New Jersey. Never so vigorous as now, its well-paved streets, its growing parks, its pure water, with the accompaniment, good health, its excellent free schools, its liberal free libraries, its fine hospital, may well cause its people to work to make its motto, *virtus et industria*, a reality and Camden citizenship to be so prized by its inhabitants that, adapting the toast of the old Scotch town of Ayr, they shall say :

Here’s to auld Camden wham ne’er a town  
surpasses

For honest men and bonnie lasses.



## INDEX.

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	Page.
Academy, Camden .....	54, 55
Arms, Coat of.....	49
Arnold, Richard .....	9
Audubon, John James.....	66
Banks .....	32, 33, 51
Baptist Church .....	30
Bridge, Delaware .....	64
British occupancy .....	21
Building and loan associations.....	43
Camden County .....	41
Camden, Earl of.....	19
Cemeteries .....	54
Children, Friendless .....	59
City Hall .....	57
Civil War .....	45
Cooper Hospital .....	56
Cooper, Willam .....	9
Cooper's Creek .....	67
Cooper's Ferries .....	29, 38
Cooper's pine field.....	28
Cooper's Point .....	9
County lines .....	41
County seat .....	41, 42
Court houses .....	13, 43, 61
Coxe, Governor .....	70
Crockett, David .....	65
Cyclone .....	62
De La Warr, Lord.....	7
Delaware River .....	7, 64
Democrats .....	41
De Vries (Dutch Commander).....	7, 67
Diamond Cottage .....	29
Dispensary .....	59
Dutch .....	7, 67
Earl of Camden.....	19
Earthquakes .....	61
Election, first city.....	36
Estaugh, John .....	69
Ferries .....	14, 15, 30, 31, 32
Fire department .....	47
Fire insurance .....	39
Franklin, Benjamin .....	25
Friends' meeting .....	11, 30
Gas supply .....	44
Gloucester County, Origin of.....	12

	Page.
Haddon, Elizabeth .....	17, 69
Haddonfield .....	34
Incorporation .....	34
Indlans .....	10, 67
Jail .....	38
Jones, Paul .....	27
Kaighn, John .....	16
Kaighn School .....	55
Kaighn's Point .....	16, 17, 30
Libraries .....	47
Line Ditch .....	18
Mahala, a legend.....	68
Market houses .....	40
Mickle, Archibald .....	16
Mickle, Isaac .....	60
Mile Stone .....	60, 61
Mulford, Dr. Isaac S.....	45
New Jersey, Burning of Ferryboat.....	44
Newton Creek .....	18
Newton Township .....	16, 34
Orphanage, West Jersey.....	59
Parsons' Hotel .....	65
Pea Shore .....	65
Post Office .....	38
Princeton College Trustees.....	24
Pulaski, Count .....	24
Pyne Poynt .....	9
Railroad, first .....	39
Republicans .....	51
Schools .....	54, 55
Smith's Island .....	65
Starr, Jesse W.....	57
Steamboats .....	30, 31, 32
Stockton, Annexation of.....	49
Street cars .....	47
Streets, as first named.....	20
Swedes .....	7
Tammany, Chief .....	65
Town hall, first.....	38
Town meeting .....	34
Town plot, first.....	19
Trent, William .....	71
Union Army Volunteers.....	46
Washington, George .....	26
Water supply .....	44, 53
Wayne, General Anthony.....	22, 23
Wedding in forest.....	70
Whitman, Walt .....	66
Windmill Island .....	28, 63









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